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Public Safety and Emergency Preparedness Canada - CSIS

Management Report

Workplace Climate Assessment: Toronto Region

August 2017

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I- MANDATE

On March 8, 2017, the Assistant Director HR at CSIS (the Service) authorized and mandated _____ of the firm _____ to undertake a Workplace Climate Assessment of the Toronto Region. It was initiated following results of Employee Surveys and workplace related issues, which were raised through other formal mechanisms. This process has the endorsement and full support of the Toronto Region management team.

II- TERMS OF REFERENCE

In accordance with the Terms of Reference dated March 8, 2017:

The Workplace Climate Assessment will provide an overall evaluation of the workplace environment at the Canadian Security Intelligence Service (CSIS), with a specific focus on the Toronto Region workplace, and will include recommendations for addressing the issues. The consultant will:

- o Interview any employee who wishes to provide input.
- o Determine what information is relevant.
- o Give witnesses due notice that they will be interviewed.
- o All parties involved have the right to representation (EA, Union, Legal).

III- REPORTING

The consultant prepared two (2) documents as follows:

1) The Management report - outlining the facts, analysis, conclusions, and including recommendations. This report includes:

- Details of the matter, including how employees perceive the workplace, workplace issues and workplace relationships;
- Supporting classified documentation to be included in the report was not removed from CSIS premises, and was kept in the Labour Relations file.

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2) An Executive Summary was also prepared in lieu of a Summary Report to Employees. Senior management made the decision to make the Management Report available to employees.

The documentation submitted by employees is in reference to the issue of diversity in the workplace and the issue of mental health. No other submission was provided or collected by the consultant. No classified documentation was submitted.

NOTE: This report has been prepared in a manner that would convey to the reader the voice of employees and managers as much as possible. We wanted to respect the will of the employees to speak to management through this consultant, in safety and confidence that the message would be delivered accurately. This was easier to achieve under some themes than under others.

IV. WORKPLACE CLIMATE ASSESSMENT PROCESS

A Workplace Climate Assessment is an informal process. The consultant's objective is to collect in a fair, objective and comprehensive manner, perceptions of staff about different key issues in the workplace and convey how they are impacting them. A climate assessment does not attempt to sort facts from perceptions and does not attempt to confirm whether examples or incidents referred to by individuals actually occurred as narrated.

By its nature the focus of such a process may appear to bring out mostly the negative elements present in the workplace. Participants naturally focused on the issues that they feel are not working well and that they would like to see improved.

Consideration should also be given to the fact that the workplace comes with a long history of a particular style of management and leadership that was very problematic for a vast majority of employees. Many felt the need to talk about the past. What is revealing in this study is the long-term impact of these workplace circumstances on the group and even on people who have joined since, including managers. With this in mind, themes were developed to better understand and speak to these issues.

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V. METHODOLOGY

An invitation by the Assistant Director, HR and the Assistant Director, Collection was sent to all employees of the Toronto Region on April 10, 2017, inviting them to participate in the process. The process was initiated to help address issues that surfaced over recent years.

From April 18 to June 23, 2017, the consultant met and spoke with employees and managers from all locations, and various units and sections, which represents 30% of the Toronto Region population. In all, employees and managers contacted the consultant for a meeting. All employees showed great interest in participating and having their voice heard. The average duration of interviews was approximately seventy (70) minutes.

Confidentiality and anonymity was paramount to all in speaking about their workplace and its climate. Although some employees preferred to take advantage of a meeting location outside the workplace that was available throughout the process most agreed to meet on location.

Employees and managers were told that this process was informal (not an investigation) and that the information collected in the form of a narrative would be organized under themes that would surface out of these accounts. Each theme would then be illustrated using the stories collected. In order to ensure anonymity, the themes would be illustrated creating composite stories, i.e. information was to be amalgamated from different narratives (from someone who experienced the described situation or incident, a person who heard of it or witnessed it).

All stories illustrating various themes represent situations or incidents experienced, witnessed or reported by more than one individual. Non-attributable quotes have been used to convey the message as heard by the consultant, and to highlight the meaning behind the themes.

Employees and managers were asked to provide their views on: 1) what works well in Toronto region, what is good; 2) what is problematic; 3) what should be done more; 4) what should be done less, or no longer; and 5) suggestions to improve the workplace climate. Employees were asked to speak from their perspective and describe how they feel coming to work in the morning and leaving at the end of the day.

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Everyone was asked to focus on the last two (2) years and on the Toronto region. Understanding that the past does carry over, many spoke about the past and how it affects the present. Also, reference was made to national programs, policies and rules and how they may affect the day-to-day climate of the region.

An invitation was also sent to all employees who were not present in the workplace at the time of this process.

VI. FINDINGS

Again, the information that follows is reported in a manner that is meant to ensure non-attribution of comments and anonymity of the participants.

A- GÉNÉRAL OBSERVATIONS (note: i)

- All agree that this is a group of dedicated employees who believe in the mission of the organization and are fully engaged in their work. It is why they see meaning in coming to work in the morning, despite the heavy and negative atmosphere within. Unfortunately, quite a few are considering leaving the organization disillusioned and disheartened, because of the work atmosphere and how decisions are made in the Toronto region.
- A small number of employees feel it was better a few years ago, in terms of social life; others prefer less socialising outside of work as it appears to have gotten out of control over the years; it was used to secure good relations with managers, and fostered favouritism (not everyone can or likes to participate).
- Many are still shocked by the behaviour of past managers and the lack of action on the part of management.
- Low morale is pervasive and negativity is draining employees' and managers' energy.

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- However, many feel things are moving in the right direction and that this is a good organization to work for, given its mandate. Almost all participants mentioned how they appreciated this exercise of contributing to the improvement of their workplace, and being fully heard. Some remain sceptic as to the impact this study will have on their work environment, and how seriously management will take the results. Most expect that management will not like what they will hear; that they are unaware how deep this runs.

"People are participating in this climate assessment process to say the abuse has to stop; they are coming to see things change".

- Employees have identified three groups that are not well connected with each other: the Intelligence Officers (IO), the non-IOS and management.

- The IO group sees itself as dedicated and competent. It is now made up of highly educated "triple A" personalities who need to understand their environment and make sense of decisions affecting them. It is a very competitive environment. They are seen (and see themselves) as the heart of the organization, where others (non-IOS) are not valued. However, it was frequent to hear IOs at the working level complaining that they do not get the recognition they feel they deserve. With the implementation of the half the IOs are now attached to the desk. It was perceived as punishment. It created two classes of job.

- This is recognised as one of the most prized regions to work in with its high exposure and the diversity of communities. However, it is felt that the priority that is currently placed on Counter Terrorism (CT) (also referred to as the is having a serious detrimental impact on Counter Intelligence (CI) which is severely understaffed and under valued.

- The non-IOS feel opportunities are taken away from them in favour of IOs. They are under resourced and they see very limited career advancement possible. The few opportunities in advancement they could count on are often filled by IOs. A few mentioned that IOs are often arrogant towards them, except when they need something.

- Management is under tremendous stress. The strain is such that this pace is not sustainable. A few mentioned that from Chief and above, management is disconnected from the working population and sometimes even the work and the

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new tools. They face competing priorities at all times. They feel that the executive (HQ) has no idea of the environment they deal with.

- It was noted that in the Toronto region the IO group represents _____ of all employees, which is the reverse _____ for the whole Service population. It is suggested this may be a factor to consider in the analysis of the climate and its conflict drivers.
- There is a general sense that the workforce in the Toronto region is far from representative of the city and the region, even the country. There is an obvious lack of diversity.
- There were some comments about generational issues and a sense of entitlement. The most important issues in this regard are 1) mobility and the fact that "things have changed"; employees now have spouses that also have good and lucrative careers. This is becoming an acute problem when people are penalised and sometimes vilified by management for not accepting to move; 2) the lingering militaristic management style, which in the view of most people no longer fits or serves the organization well.
- The vast majority agree that the militaristic culture of the past is still very present. It is described as "do as I say, not as I do", "do it because I say so" and "buck up little soldier (complaining not allowed)-I did it, now you do it".
- The working level employees feel they are not valued, nor understood. The IOs even feel exploited having made the commitment to mobility; they feel this is held against them as a constant threat. "Because I say so" and "I had to do it, so you do it" is not an acceptable explanation for these decisions to move employees.
- Leadership is said to have been non-existent for years (and for some is still weak). People management skills are lacking at all levels. Many suggested training in people management and communication, as well as conflict resolution for the levels 9 and up.
- There is little support for career management and planning. Career opportunities and training are said to be usually offered to employees who are favoured by managers. It is said to be a "who you know – who likes you" system. There is a generalised sense that career advancement and opportunities are based on relationships with the deciders, not competency or individual best fit or special expertise, the latter being simply ignored.

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- There is a sense that rotation of positions is too frequent. You have no time to learn the job, the material. It is very disruptive. Within two years, you or your supervisor will have moved. Managers move so often, completing the Performance Evaluation Reviews (PER) has become problematic. Managers have no time to make their mark, or to recover from a mistake.
- Fear of reprisal is clearly present. It is a perception based on what has happened to people who spoke up against managers.
- The organization is not seen as a "learning" one. It is a culture where you are harshly blamed for mistakes and penalised, your mistakes follow you for a very long time, no matter how small, and according to whom. As a result, not only does it thwart advancement of otherwise good people, it also paralyses decision-making.
- Interpersonal relationships are generally very good. It was said that many sub-groups have congealed in a positive manner around this exercise. However, a few individuals deplore the fact that unprofessional behaviour, inappropriate comments and even bullying in certain cases remain unchecked by colleagues and managers.
- A majority of employees have confirmed their lack of trust in management. Problems and problem employees are not addressed. Abuse of leave is not addressed. All this has an impact on morale. The solution comes in the form of a general rule or policy that penalises everyone. It is compared to the army solution where problematic behaviour is left to be addressed by the pressure of the group, not addressed by direct intervention of the authority with the individual. However, in an environment where employees are not allowed to know who is at fault, this system is ineffective and creates a lot of frustration.
- Senior management seems to be under the impression that there is a small contingent of people that are unhappy and vocal. Newer middle managers are concerned that they are tainted by the by-gone era of management style. Most employees however, recognise the better style and approach of the new generation of managers. The latter are concerned with the "trust-gap". They feel their efforts are not recognised, their explanations for decisions not believed. They have no time to turn things around before they get moved again.

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- All these issues are holding back the organization from getting better. It is a distraction that gets in the way of moving forward. Participants said they all want to move forward.

"If we could fix even just a few of these things, we would be on fire".

More details about these issues will be found through the themes below. The themes have been organized under three categories: Workplace Environment – Leadership and Trust – Systemic Issues.

B- WORKPLACE ENVIRONMENT

1. IMPACT OF PAST MANAGERIAL ACTIONS AND CLIMATE

Many who have been in the Toronto region for many years have commented on issues with past managers. They witnessed all signs of an old boy's network where managers protected each other and their favourite employees who had gained access to the inner circle.

Managers were left to yell, swear, be disrespectful, demeaning and offensive to people and to make inappropriate comments and jokes about employees in front of employees and other managers. There was regular, weekly drinking in the offices. *"Decisions were made over a drink, at the pub or in the office"*.

With employees present (in meetings – including Human Resources Management Committee meetings (HRMC), bullpen, office, etc), managers would regularly denigrate and joke about employees. They would say this one is "stupid"; this one is "useless" during HR reviews. It fostered distrust. People would wonder what managers could be saying about them behind their back. They would talk about the work of the employee, but also comment on their personal life.

They would also make inappropriate comments and denigrate other managers. They would start rumours about employees (the latter is said to still be happening, at least three examples were brought up).

Inappropriate language was commonplace and unfortunately set the tone for most conversations in the office. Managers would make negative comments for

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example on the absence of employees in front of their colleagues, expressing disbelief as to the reason given.

Females would have been encouraged to smile more in order to get ahead.

Some mentioned, "it felt like you had to always be on their good side", explaining how they felt by comparing it to the "abused spouse syndrome".

Many observed, "Rules did not apply" to an employee who is said to have been all along in the in-group. His behaviour was sometimes very outrageous; his comments embarrassing to many people. A number of employees said they were surprised he talked about filing a complaint given his own behaviour. People observing the situation and what was allowed lost trust in managers. "They let it go too far".

People used to hear "shouting matches" across the floor.

Some people noted that they did not realise at the time how this behaviour was affecting the workplace. They recognised having been influenced by it and started to swear, joke, and demean each other, having given in to this kind of climate. Others acknowledged that they participated in order to not miss out on opportunities, "if this is the way in this organization..." others "kept their head down". Cliques formed.

Employees believe management did not realize the impact of being so absent; to not have a strong leader put an end to this office drinking, misogynistic and discriminatory culture – to do nothing. Management knew of it all. On the contrary, one manager would publicly insult, belittle and humiliate another, but the latter would not object or respond. This sent a powerful message to everyone. People coped but became demoralised.

Some say they miss the socializing. Managers now stay away from these practices, but people are saying they are missing on opportunities to get to know them at a personal level. The pendulum has swung the other way. It illustrated how bad it has to get before they do something. As a result, we thought "they don't care", they expected that we would just ignore it too and get on with business. The behaviour modelling was atrocious.

Some have a sense that things are truly improving, "we are on the right path. But people will not forget easily that the behaviour was allowed to go on for so long".

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2. LINGERING IMPACT OF A HARASSMENT COMPLAINT

All people are aware of the complaint that was investigated last year. They understand it requires confidentiality and that management is very limited in what it can say about it. The issue is what is being done about the situation. The group is still divided, "like a nasty divorce". People took sides.

According to many, management did not show any accountability towards the issues underpinning the filing of the complaint. The issues were dismissed and minimised. A few employees mentioned they are uncomfortable to hear senior managers still talk very highly of managers who left, having witnessed their inappropriate behaviour for years without intervention from higher management.

Others are in disbelief of what happened considering the behaviour that was tolerated for years on the part of certain managers and also of the employee involved.

Almost all acknowledged being aware of another complaint, which they referred to as a class action lawsuit against the organization. Some have reported that

Many are wondering how people can get past this situation, considering the rumours that there is now a lawsuit. There is a lot of speculation and no information.

3. LOW MORALE

"It is as if a dark cloud follows you around everywhere."

Employees observed that they started by enjoying and loving their work happy they had found their vocation – because this is what it is - and meaning to their work. But after 10, 15 years they are now totally jaded.

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This is considered the only organization where this kind of work can be done. That is why people stay – "because the work is fascinating". Many say they are working out of their personal sense of pride in their work and their ethics, but are thinking of leaving due to the heavy unhealthy climate, lack of recognition, lack of leadership and professional growth.

Management's mindset is that "it is an honour to work here so I can ask anything of you. People who joined believing they would contribute and make a difference are now in a mindset that it is all pensionable time".

With such strong low morale, performance is affected. It is very emotionally costly on people. "The gossip mill depletes our energy". Many who would never have thought of leaving the organization, to which they dedicated themselves, are looking elsewhere.

They don't push themselves like they should or did elsewhere. There is disengagement because ideas are shutdown without explanation. Decisions are made without explanations and without taking advantage of the expertise of the people or the outside knowledge from past work experience or other life circumstances. The organization is missing out on expertise and ideas that people no longer have the heart to put forward.

Everyone walks on eggs, afraid of making mistakes that cause retribution rather than learning. More than one person said people refer to the as "District 13", referring to the movie *The Hunger Games*.

Joking and sarcasms are ways to currently cope with the situation. People are tired of hearing, "Change has to start with you." Because they feel they have no power or control – it is a dictatorial regime. Also, there is no leadership on the matter of respectful behaviour and accountability; it needs to start there in their view.

A number of employees mentioned that they felt they were not used to their full potential, individual abilities or strength. *"I feel surrounded by very talented professionals that are beaten down. They cannot reach their potential"*.

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4. CULTURE: PARA/MILITARY CULTURE – OLD BOYS CLUB MENTALITY

This theme was developed as a subset of the leadership theme. This issue has a significant impact on the workplace climate according to employees. It also helps clarify what they see as problematic with the leadership style of some managers.

It is said, "the hierarchy is too rigid; there are too many levels. It hinders communication, slows down decision-making". The working level feels management is making decisions based only on a brief summary and information filtered by middle management. In return, the employees do not get the benefit of better understanding the greater issues and decision-making criteria of upper management.

Whole units are punished for the mistake of one member, but they don't know who that is, and the pressure they could apply on the individual cannot happen. It is also perceived as a way to avoid addressing the issue with the one individual. "These small issues are irritating and cumulative at the end of the day. We feel we are not treated as adults; why then behave like adults..."

"The culture here is "kiss up, kick down"; you certainly do not get the best of your people this way". In the past, "Rules did not apply to senior managers and they had their inner circle that benefitted from their protection".

Sometimes we feel we are still in the 1984 RCMP mentality. Our Act has not evolved either. "This is the land that time forgot".

5. RUMOURS AND GOSSIPING – REPUTATIONS JEOPARDIZED

Almost all reflected: "It is a very small world where everyone knows everyone's business; or think they know...People read too much into what they see".

All are preoccupied: "There is too much rumint. They are being IOs inside the organization, in the workplace as much as they are outside doing their job. It is second nature, it becomes challenging. When people come into the building, they forget to turn "it" off – they treat each other like a source, not a colleague. It is embedded in the culture. It has become a culture of complaining. There is no benefit of the doubt afforded to management."

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Also: "Following HRMC meetings, some managers come to the employees (or the bull pen) and make the announcements. They add personal comments and opinions that sometimes denigrate the person. Their reputation is done for. This has been done for so long that it is as if the managers do not realize what they are doing, and the negative impact it has on the person and also on the group. You need a thick skin in this workplace – it should not be the case."

Others said: "This is such a small community your reputation follows you. If your reputation is negative it precedes you. People believe it when it comes from the very top management. They should be held to a higher degree of discretion and ethics. It has become so OK to talk negatively about people we do not notice it anymore. But the effect is insidious. Everybody does it."

It seems that what people are saying is that people constantly researching other people – reputation is everything. "Once it is tainted, and you do not know how or why, that's it; it's over"

Furthermore: "At one point we become desensitized, even finding ourselves participating in gossip and rumour mongering; and worst, character assassination".

It was remarked: "I know things about my colleagues in the region that I should not know – personal – even security related."

"We are all guilty of rumour mongering and gossip. It does more harm than good. I am not sure of what can be done to stop this unhealthy habit. It is in people's nature to put two and two together and speculate. All are very inquisitive people and figuring out why things are what they are is part of their nature. Under the current circumstances this speculation turns to the negative".

6. INAPPROPRIATE BEHAVIOURS, LACK OF CIVILITY, DISCRIMINATION

Swearing is common but not perceived as out of control. It was more prominent in the days of the former managers. It got to the point where everyone was using the same language. At this time, most employees indicated that they consider the language in the workplace to be more civil and respectful. There are some pockets where some jokes and discriminatory comments are still being made with regards to ethnicity and the communities that are monitored.

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It was said a few times: "As a woman, you let a lot roll off your back, as is probably the case still in some other organizations, but this is the public service after all, and at one point, one incident is too much". Many spoke of the case of a female IO, who was not allowed to proceed with an interview. The reason clearly given by the manager was that she was a woman.

There is a general lack of thoughtfulness towards cultural differences and sensitivities. One employee was heard saying of a colleague speaking on the phone, "Oh! He is speaking terrorist". Former managers dubbed another employee with a French accent "a retard".

People have heard reference to the BC colleagues, as "fools", to Quebec as "Morons", and to Headquarters (HQ) as "Imbeciles" and other such immature comments. This kind of behaviour was even encouraged in the past. There was a void in leadership allowing this to happen.

"We never actually deal with anything, we just move people. — "People give up, it is disheartening" - "why bother complaining or raising issues". — "It is all perception; it is not real according to senior management; that is what they say in town halls." — "People are getting physically sick from that stress and disempowerment".

7. INTERPERSONAL RELATIONS

Generally the interpersonal interactions appear to be good between employees with the exception of a few pockets where there is denigration of each other and strong competitiveness. There is a lot of gossip everywhere; sometimes detrimental to individuals when rumours are started that attacks their reputation. It seems everyone has a "reputation" and no one knows what facts or inaccurate stories they are based on.

As management appears to become more aware of mental health issues, some employees are still intolerant towards their colleagues. Absences are the source of dismissive rumours and comments such as "I knew he/she could not cut it" or "what a wimp"; this also from some managers who are still intolerant to the work-life balance, as in the old mentality. For example, publicly dismissing an employee for taking paternity leave and insinuating that it would be detrimental to his career.

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People are often very judgmental of each other. Negative rumours travel fast and grow. They become fact. "This is an unhappy and unhealthy place".

There is little communication between the _____ in the Toronto office.

Some have observed that there are in fact pockets of employees where interpersonal relations are more tense; they are more competitive and some individuals may be subject to bullying.

Some people are marginalised. There is sometimes a "mob mentality" and "bad mouthing". There are pockets where people do not "play nice". There is character assassination and back stabbing; "we have to watch our back all the time". People are very competitive and disloyal to each other in some circles. Managers are aware and do nothing to stop this. It is believed that they are afraid it might interfere with their career advancement.

Generally, there is good camaraderie and socializing outside work.

8. FEAR OF REPRISAL

Some, who are seen as rising stars, suddenly see their prospects quashed after a disagreement with a manager, a mistake that is never explained, and worse, a rumour that would turn out to be unfounded.

Many report that they have witnessed good performing employees being sent to the "penalty box", meaning a less preferable assignment, such as that of _____ or sent to "screening" following a fall out with a manager. There have been enough cases such as this, that people are now asking newly assigned people whether it is their choice.

An assignment as _____ is seen as reprisal in some circumstances. The position is not as valued by employees and it limits their career opportunities because experience in interviewing is often a requirement for various positions. _____ end up with little of this specific experience, or do not have recent and extensive such experience. They often do not possess the mandatory or minimum requirements for training.

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Still recently, a manager was heard saying to an employee, "we can find creative ways to get you out". Another employee who went to the Employee Association saw the whole thing backfire, the employee was found to be at fault, "They can and they do control your career".

For some this fear of reprisal is simply due to the fact that this is a life's career in a very insular organization. You will live with these people your whole career. They will have the power to influence your career and future assignment through the rumour network for years to come. You do not want to be on someone's wrong side, even less make enemies.

One employee said, "If this conversation comes out, I will deny everything."

Others have mentioned their suspicion that managers are using Internal Security information against employees – based on information revealed.

Many employees provided concrete examples of reprisal. One refers to an employee who was heard saying that for family reasons "I would prefer not to work next weekend". The manager was overheard saying, "I see where your priorities are". The following week the same employee was sent to a less desirable assignment, known as the "penalty box".

Many also mentioned having witnessed or heard of employees who were not ready to move (for family or other reason) in order to get a promotion or advance their career, ending up assigned to unfavourable positions, considered by many as punishment.

People are black listed. People are black balled. We see people being moved shortly after they have had a disagreement with a manager. If you complain you are "marked"; if you are a "yes-man" you are promoted.

Some feel mistakes are never forgiven, they follow you your whole career through the gossip of managers, unless you are "in the inner circle" where they forgive all".

"Without fear of reprisal for speaking up, there could be conversation to ensure that people can focus on what they are good at".

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Employees have heard reports that a manager would have threatened a colleague saying "I have moved people out of their position in the past, but I don't want to move you".

During a Town Hall, the issue of fear of reprisal came up. Senior managers responded that they could do nothing unless they had examples. Employees said no one would dare go to them, precisely because of this true fear of reprisal. Some even saw that as a threat in itself. So, they saw the opportunity with this study and are participating to provide examples.

The IO group is generally understaffed. It is said that no one will say no to a request or task by management – no pushback – because of how it will be perceived by managers.

"People need to be empowered to speak up".

C- LEADERSHIP AND TRUST

9. LEADERSHIP

For some, the lack of confidence of managers in employees and the lack of trust of employees towards managers are at the source of most issues of leadership in the Toronto region. It hinders productivity and performance and requires managers to resort to authority to get things done. This in turn generates a vicious cycle of mistrust. It also fosters micro-management, up to the RDG level. When employees raised this issue during a town hall, a member of senior management was heard saying, "we will get involved sometimes; if you don't like it, you can leave the Service".

A number of managers are seen as being from the older generation and style of leadership: the "you do it because I tell you", "buck up little soldier" and the "I did it, so you do it" approach. People do not want to hear, "when I was in the army", they did not join the army.

It is perceived that the middle managers are very much risk averse. They no longer make decisions for fear of being wrong and being chastised by higher ups, or of losing opportunities for advancement. It paralyses them and the system. Employees feel it useless to bring up ideas, knowing they are regularly rejected.

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Furthermore, there is high disengagement, as employees will never be told why their idea was not accepted.

This is a strong contributor to the low morale. People feel they can do more, they feel they are held back. As dedicated to the mission as they are, this is very frustrating. At a minimum, they feel they deserve an explanation to learn from their mistakes (if any) and better present their ideas next time.

Others feel that a lot of frustrations in the working ranks come from middle management acting based on their interpretation of what senior management wants, not what the subject matter experts propose. Employees report what they see as emotionally driven decisions that are pushed down on the working level.

Public negative and inappropriate comments about employees on the part of managers are still occurring. These comments are humiliating and demeaning. They are also embarrassing to others around. Everyone fears to be next. Some said that accusations have been made in public without the manager verifying facts and circumstances before an angry and loud outburst.

A few people also mentioned the use of demeaning and humiliating nicknames. More people pointed to the inaction of managers in dealing with inappropriate behaviour of employees. Employees that feel bullied or harassed by colleagues have no hope of seeing a manager put an end to this behaviour. Making a complaint is a certain career-limiting move and possibly will result in being sent to the "penalty box" (for example screening).

Management is seen to have taken "zero" responsibility for the inappropriate behaviour of the former managers. Their discourse has had the effect of minimizing the situation. Managers are losing respect in the process.

As mentioned above, in a town hall discussion, senior management addressed the issue of fear of reprisal raised in the 2015 employee survey. They indicated that these were only perceptions and asked for examples. Many said that they looked at each other in disbelief. They indicated that management lost credibility and respect. The conversations often turned to lack of trust in management from there.

Many commented on the level 9 supervisors who have to develop stronger abilities to "delegate down and defend up". Some are said to lack tools to

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manage people as front line supervisors and team builders. Decisions take too long. No one wants to be accountable for decisions – risk averse.

Level 8 consider level 9 to be the most important pivot, as team leaders they are the bridge between them and management. They need to be better at communicating up and down. Many said that the current level 8 individuals in acting position 9 are doing better. Most agree that level 9 are moved around too often (the 2 year rule does not apply to them). There is no stability. There are wide differences in management style of level 9 supervisors, some are literally absent managers, and others are micro-managers, while "some current heads are amazing". The latter advocate for their team and provide feedback from their meetings with their managers.

The hierarchy is said to be heavy. Level 9 roles and responsibilities seem unclear. "They saw themselves as desk experts, but they have to deal with issues and people management in a front line role. Level 11 managers sometimes bypass level 10 middle managers by going directly to working level employees". It was said that some level 10 are "only a mailbox". A new senior 8 role was created as desk expert. But this was discontinued. It created what was seen as an additional level.

Statistics are taking over as a basis for decision-making, rather than the quality of the work. Some feel that managers have no motivation or incentive to develop a relationship with their staff. They move regularly; "it is all about getting their promotions and bonuses". There is a lot of pressure coming from middle management that is considered unjustified.

The new younger managers are having a positive impact. They are changing people's expectations of management. The presence of women at the higher level is also having a positive impact to change the "old boys" culture.

Some have questioned whether leadership is teachable and learnable.

Managers feel that the employees are expecting them to be the ones motivating and inspiring them; that they are not recognizing the efforts that are being made. The speculation as to the intention of management decisions is very negative. There is no trust, but also no ownership on the part of employees about the way they feel.

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"The new managers are trying to change things, to change the approach. They bring a different style. It is more professional and corporate. It is quieter now".

10. LACK OF ACCOUNTABILITY

Also related to leadership issues is what employees see as lack of accountability.

Many mentioned that during a town hall discussing the results of the employee survey, a senior manager said sometimes it is a perception of how things are; it is not reality. "He was saying this is not real; it is in your head. It is our fault we feel this way, we just have to change our thinking. Another way it is dismissed is by saying that this happened before their time".

People concluded that senior managers do not believe in the results of the survey, "they don't care about what we think – the whole survey process was invalidated". As a result there is much scepticism about the current process of the third party climate evaluation. "They will not like what they will see, and they will do nothing about it".

The second most important issue in this category raised by staff is the matter of employees' performance problems that are not addressed by managers. It is very frustrating for other employees who want to do a good job. They end up with extra workload or delayed tasking. Problems of performance or attendance, as well as behaviour are ignored according to the majority of employees. There are no consequences. "It used to be drinking at work was even tolerated".

Most times, people are moved rather than addressing an interpersonal conflict between individuals, or frustrations of a group with a poor performer or difficult person. There appears to be no attempt to address the real issue, the problem is simply moved. These staffing actions have repercussions and have often multiplied the problem. Qualified employees could be moved to areas where they have no expertise or knowledge. There was also a sense of favouritism where spouses or family were involved. Every time, management lost credibility and respect.

It is believed, "Managers do nothing for fear of grievance or complaint. It does not work that way". To employees, who are recruited because of their problem solving skills, this lack of response from management to their issues is the biggest problem.

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Managers feel they are now held to a higher standard. They feel that they are facing a challenge to change the mentality of the employees who lived through difficult years where any behaviour was allowed. They fear their efforts are going unnoticed, a few employees stuck in the past.

11. ARBITRARY DECISION MAKING – FAVOURITISM – TOO MUCH MOVEMENT AND ROTATIONS

It is often not clear how people are picked for various tasks, including interviews (in the case of IOs). No one knows how level 9, 10, 11, 12, even DG are picked. "They just talk between themselves to select people. The PERs are irrelevant. It is who they like personally".

Assignments to the role of _____ and _____ are made without explanation. There is constant movement from desk to desk, again without explanation. It is said that the "operational requirement" justification provided is seen as a "euphemism".

Decisions on course attendance are made contrary to the requirements published, while there are people who showed interest and meet the requirements. "How is that explainable?" Some would have received training for work they do not do.

Policies apply to some, not others. "Rules are constantly changing". The same circumstances result in a different treatment (approved leave for example). It varies from one supervisor to another.

People are moved around too much. One employee was moved five (5) times within eighteen (18) months. Another had ten (10) supervisors in five (5) years. Files are also moved without notice or explanation from one employee to another.

There is still an uneven distribution of training opportunities between _____ and the _____ but it is getting better. However, when one individual is repeatedly selected for training it creates the optics of favouritism.

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12. LACK OF TRUST

People fear showing vulnerabilities. Many do not ask for leave, afraid of how it will be interpreted, as if they don't cut it. It fosters presenteeism.

It is said that: "Some managers cannot be trusted with confidential and personal information or discussions".

Training has been offered recently, but participants feel like it has been used as an evaluation tool, instead of a development tool, without informing the employees as such. "It was badly presented and did not offer tips in the first place. Results could not be representative of the employees' knowledge and competencies. Employees did not even get the results of the practical exercise. It was sent directly to managers. If in fact it was a test, not a learning activity, it was very unfair. This kind of thing does nothing to improve trust. Is this used at HRMC?"

There is a perception that some managers, former IOs, manipulate their staff the way they used to manipulate their sources. "They hold the assignment to a position like a carrot in front of them, sometimes playing them against each other".

Mistrust goes both ways. "*Employees do not trust managers; managers do not care for the employees*". "*Nobody in upper management has our back. It is their career first*".

13. LACK OF RECOGNITION – VALUING EMPLOYEES

Many remarked that senior management never come out of their office; never leave "They do not acknowledge employees in the elevator. They do not know who we are, and most of us are usually on the road".

Most people do not believe in the recognition awards. They are very sarcastic about it. Most times, it is not done right. For example, "after a difficult operation, managers gave an award but did not even take time to learn about the operation, to talk to the people. They even asked one person of the group to write the speech for it!"

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Usually it takes up to a year for the award to be given, by then it has lost meaning.

An important number of employees said: "We are not valued. We feel like peons that can be moved at will, irrelevant of our life circumstances. They should be happy with some of the people who want to stay in the region. Some are very competent and experienced".

Employees are of the view that for senior management it is all about the organization: "we are your family". The question was asked: "Do they not understand that you get more loyalty, respect, and credibility as well as output from employees, when you acknowledge their needs and views, and you take care of them. It does not mean agreeing to all their demands".

Others said: "You basically give your life to the Service, but when you need help, they are not there for you. This is not a compassionate caring organization. Whether an employee works at 200% or just 10%, there is no difference".

Personal circumstances are seen to be irrelevant to managers. Employees are leaving or are forced into positions that are not suited for them, or that are a demotion to accommodate their changing needs and personal circumstances.

And: "This sense of lack of recognition, of value, is prominent to the point of some resentment in the non-IO group. The non-IOs are never included in the rewards and recognitions. As a result these people do not feel part of the success, of the mission of the Service".

Also: "Some files are micro-managed by chiefs and DDGs or taken away when they become interesting or may have visibility. It is very difficult for the employee that brought it to that point and is subsequently disconnected and ignored".

"Your sense of pride for the organization is robbed from you with the way you can be unfairly treated".

"Our passion and dedication is not valued by the managers. They should owe us at least the respect of our reputation".

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14. COMMUNICATION

The lack of communication from management to employee fosters an environment where the rumour mill takes over. It allows people to speculate on reasons for decisions and other issues. In the current negative atmosphere this can be devastating.

People are ill equipped to address issues with their colleagues or behaviours that they find inappropriate or offensive.

Communication is lacking from top down and across. Level 9 supervisors want to be in the know to feel part of the fold; that management cares. Generally, level 9 are not getting the briefings they need.

With regards to the complaint last year, although everyone recognizes the need for confidentiality in the matter of formal complaints, most feel that communication could have been done better within those boundaries. Communication totally failed in this matter.

There is a lack of communication – or too many hierarchical levels – to ensure good information on cases prior to decisions, for example when an approach is suggested by officers and supervisors. Some feel middle management do not pushback, or advocate for the officers. When the response comes back from management, there is no explanation, so no learning.

"Where communication is concerned we could do a better job".

15. CAREER PLANNING

Conversations around career objectives and interests during the PER process never see a follow-up. "It is a useless part of the exercise".

Most people feel they have no power over their career. The general view is that you are very unlikely to be promoted in the Toronto region. You have to move to HQ. So many decide not to go for a promotion in order to stay with their family in the Toronto region. Some heard that if you are not willing to move, you are not even allowed to apply. This does not seem right to many, as there are many vacancies in the Toronto region (supervisors for example).

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The career advancement path is clearly viewed as a matter of becoming management's favourite. Decisions appear to be based solely on the good relationship with managers, not competencies, life experience (outside the organization, sometimes very valuable) or work experience, even particular expertise or language.

Reputation and relationships are therefore everything. At the same time they are very fragile. Rumours are easily started; even by managers against certain employees or other managers.

Positions are often filled with people who do not have the basic requirements.

Managers manage for the region exclusively. Once someone is due to move out, there is no longer attention to this person in terms of opportunities and training. It is short sighted from the point of view of the organization as a whole.

It is said that the HR regional unit is of little assistance in career planning. That unit added its own frustrations with staffing decisions that used to be made by managers based only on their relationship with the candidate. Staffing policies and processes are better followed now, but the perception of bias remains.

There is some sense of back door dealings of employees, based on conversations between managers, which have been overheard in the past.

Once appointed in supervisory position (at any level) there is no training provided. "People can be very good at what they do and get promoted because of it. This does not make them good at supervising people".

"Unless you adhere to their leadership style of the old days you will not move up. You have to become like them. We have seen some of our colleagues already transformed. They promote those that are like-minded".

16. APPLICATION OF THE MOBILITY RULE

Managers believe this issue to be the most important irritant to the majority employees, the IOs. They believe this rule and the 2-year rule are misunderstood. That is because these rules are impediments to their career progression and can be frustrating. Employees have linked this issue to that of reprisal.

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The mobility rule, although understood and accepted by most, is considered by some to be only a left over from the original culture and mentality (former RCMP) – from the militaristic culture, which no longer finds its place in a more and more civilian organization where employees' background are different than in the past, and where spouses have an often gratifying and well paid career, and opportunities. It is becoming very difficult to uproot families.

Managers are seen to simply perpetuate what was done to them under the old regime when they say, "I had to move more than 10 times so you have to move". This is said not to be financially responsible for the organization and the individual.

In many instances, the requirement to move is seen as arbitrary and unjustified. One example that was brought up by many people is the case of

It is seen by most as a loss for the organization. The same would have happened to another employee a few years ago.

Based on what people see around them, the perception is that anyone who resists the mobility rule will get retribution. This occurs in the form of lesser duties, lesser responsibilities, missed training opportunities and assignment to screening or as a . The latter two assignments and training opportunities are what people mentioned most as forms of retaliation when one disagrees with management or raises an objection to a decision.

Some see mobility as a particularly challenging issue in the Toronto region. The Service (HQ) does not recognise the impact of the cost of living (and in particular housing) in the city and in the GTA. This means that if people were to leave the area for promotional and career advancement opportunities, they feel it unlikely to be able to afford to come back. Also, commute time and traffic are highly time consuming and infringing greatly on family time.

On the other hand, Toronto region is not enticing people to join although it is very attractive in terms of its work diversity and opportunities, with its highly multicultural city and international status. The cost of living and temporary nature of assignments to the region (as in others) mixed in with its reputation for a negative work climate and low morale makes it a challenge to recruit from HQ or other regions.

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Despite these circumstances, those who wish to remain are faced with a lack of upward mobility. Many in acting positions for months, who have shown to their team and to management their competency and ability to manage the teams and the tasks, are denied the opportunity to access the position on a permanent basis; this, in order to make room for people coming from HQ...who never come.

The end result of this rule is that managers are simply people who are willing to move, whether they are competent and good people managers or not.

Senior management believes that the reason behind the mobility requirement is valid and not well understood by employees. Employees feel that senior managers hold too much power over their career and even their life with this particular unchecked authority.

The fact that people coming from Ottawa on temporary assignments get a pay increase of 7-8% for cost of living indicates the difference in the cost of living in the Toronto region. But the regular employees do not get this pay adjustment. In fact what happens is that people from Ottawa come to the Toronto region, take the jobs that qualified Toronto region employees can do, and they also get a pay bump and a promotion. It is seen as very unfair.

"They are punishing people for putting their family first in an organization where people are willing to do the work but sometimes see circumstances outside of their control change".

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D. SYSTEMIC ISSUES

Only very few people brought the office move outside the downtown core as a current issue.

17. THE SPOT MODEL

It seems the _____ has inadvertently created two "classes" of IOs: the "real ones", the _____ and the "unfortunate" _____. Participants reflecting on the said: "Maybe what the _____ reveals, is that some people do not know how to be cooperative". Also, "The problem with _____ is that IOs have to rely on other IOs to do their job".

The _____ was presented as a hierarchy. Some people are said to have cried when they were told that they would be a _____. Furthermore, with the two-year rule, a _____ has to wait two years to be appointed as an _____. It is an important disadvantage because they are not getting the kind of experience required for many training and career opportunities.

The _____ could be misunderstood. People do not understand the different roles. There was no training. It seems that in the last six months all training goes to the _____ and the _____ only get refreshers. This creates an awkward competition and tension.

A few employees noted that _____ are largely male employees; while _____ are mostly female and visible minorities. Others have noted that it appears the _____ has killed the initiative and development of strategies on the part of the _____ who have to wait on _____ to task them.

Some _____ also mentioned that they are often wasting time waiting for tasking from _____ instead of working cases in the field. Many mentioned a need to clarify the roles. _____ is dividing the IO group. It created onus on one group and killed the initiative in the other. It has had an important impact and has contributed to the break down of relationships".

Some have mentioned that the _____ is applied differently on the _____ and _____ . Because management is said to not want to hear criticisms of the _____ no improvement or adaptation is possible.

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18. COMPETITIONS - STAFFING

Almost all employees are of the opinion that merit is not the primary factor in staffing (or training opportunities for career advancement). Many such decisions are questioned, sometimes in disbelief. Many said the basic requirements posted are often ignored.

"It used to be you had to be part of the "clique", the in-group. Now it is more subtle."

At one point everyone feared the outcome of the HRMC meetings. "It felt like managers were pony trading and we would be told after to move desk – no reason or prior discussions". Comments and exchanges during the HRMC Committee meetings "used to be devastatingly disrespectful and denigrating of employees".

Even if there is a posting, people believe that the candidate has already been chosen. It is how well you know the manager. It is slowly changing. Calls for expression of interest are appreciated.

Management opportunities (non-IOS positions) are often provided to IOs who have no training or experience in these positions, over qualified non-IOS. Non-IOS see their career opportunities greatly reduced under those circumstances. One example provided was the past appointment of an IO to the position of HR Head.

There is a sense that management uses the "best fit" criteria to pick and select who they want, who they like. After these competitions, there is no more trust for the manager or the selected candidate.

Appointments are not seen as a matter of competency but of favouritism. There is a lack of transparency in the processes. A pool can be collapsed if they don't like the candidates in it.

Even if an IO in Toronto region is successful with the new level 9 generic competition, they would not get appointed unless they move. Furthermore, they have to stay on the sidelines for the next round (not allowed to compete again for another year). However, it is seen as very unfair that IOs in HQ who are successful but do not want to move to a region, still get appointed to the level, remaining in HQ.

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19. RECRUITING

At this point, newly hired IOs are more educated than some of the managers. Recruitment is very slow for IOs as well as surveillants (only two (2) spots for training per year).

This region used to be the place to be. It was considered the biggest and "badest" where the real work in Canada happened. It attracted "big personalities". This had a negative impact over time. Recruiting now seems a challenge. People are not coming to the Toronto region because of the financial burden but also because of the reputation of the management team.

Recruitment focuses on bilingualism in the official languages. "But we miss out on people who are otherwise fully bilingual in the other key languages we face here in the Toronto region". A few people mentioned that this asset is not sought after or fully taken advantage of. Management does not take this asset into account enough.

Some reflected that there is a need to recruit people that have more life experience and maturity, as well as being well travelled and better exposed to other cultures. "This organization is not the place for a first career, you need some experience out there in the world".

There is an important gap in diversity as far as employees are concerned. New recruits still do not represent Canada's diversity.

20. MANAGEMENT OF OVERTIME AND SCHEDULING

Management of overtime and shift schedule was problematic. Sometimes, people are working side by side, some were allowed overtime, others not. The time was rescheduled; this with full discretion of managers to decide when you do the extra time and when you get the time compensated, hour for hour (with no say from the employee).

It is very disruptive to family life and should be adequately compensated. Sometimes you do the extra work and still have to show up at work at your regular hours, without monetary compensation for the impact it has on you (sometime also monetary: babysitter, unused tickets, etc).

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There is talk about going back to re-scheduling (one of the current rumours). This is seen as taking advantage of the dedication of employees in a non-unionized environment. This is a factor that affects morale. Managers have been heard saying, "I can schedule you anytime I want" or "I own your time". It is "nickel and diming of the dedicated employees".

Employees said: "We understand the job has to be done at these hours, but if you had something planned or do not agree with the conditions the work is paid at, you are told: If you do not want to do it, I will find someone who will". Another employee said, "I have seen people be moved after refusing".

This is an important factor in shaping employee morale. Employees who are now receiving overtime pay for this work fear that management will revert to the old way of requiring compensation time.

21. NO RECOURSE - SENSE OF DISENPOWERMENT

Many people referred to the goodwill of the Employee Association and its President. However, they are unanimous in their view that the Association is powerless to assist them in resolving any kind of issue. It is said: "The EA has no teeth. - People have no faith in the EA. Managers are all powerful. They can do whatever they want".

Most feel that they are without recourse. The grievance process is perceived as a risky one, based on the consequences for one's career in the aftermath – and this is said recognizing that almost all grievances have been successful at the last level (HQ). Proving management wrong is not a successful strategy in the long term.

Employees do not trust the regional HR Unit to provide them with information with regards to HR and various work policies. They often find more or contradictory information when they reach out to HQ HR advisors. Local HR is also seen to be powerless to address their issues.

Many said: "We do not resolve workplace conflicts – we move people or people go on leave. We have no constructive and safe process for this. The open door policy is not real. It would be perceived as going over your manager's head".

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Also: "All these issues have been brought up in the past, in town halls and surveys. Nothing was ever done. A number of employees fear that the results of this exercise will never be shared with the employees".

"Simply said, they do not allow dissent."

E. CHANGING ENVIRONMENT

Although slow and challenging, a significant number of employees noted that they have observed and experienced positive change over the last twenty-four (24) months or so. They see an effort on management's part at better listening to people; at being more inclusive; in communicating better; at being more transparent; and being careful with their approach to the newest generation of employees.

Most agreed that management is adjusting. People expressed experiencing difficulty now with only a minority of managers. It is now more the exception. The presence of women and younger managers at higher echelons may have something to do with the change in management style. There is more of a cooperative style with the level 9. Managers are more respectful of each other.

The town halls as well as the invitation to express interest in training or assignments are seen as positive. However, the resulting decisions need to be transparent and fair as well.

Management seems more tolerant and understanding of mental health issues – no longer publicly judgemental.

It is said: "The old boy club is falling apart and the incidents related to it are decreasing. People are being more vocal and now managers have to deal with it. In the last year people are somewhat less fearful of reprisal".

Almost all employees agree that the workplace is now a more respectful one, although a few people are considered short tempered.

There are some concerns that forms of differential treatment based on gender (in tasking) and family status (in assignments and career progression) are still present. Inappropriate comments continue to be made occasionally and

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performance issues have been inappropriately addressed in public in some instances. One or two employees feel they have been bullied or personally harassed in the recent past.

There is still a tendency to make blanket discriminatory comments about the communities where there is ongoing attention paid to individuals, making some employees uncomfortable.

Interactions are all generally more positive and respectful lately. Many have recognised the improvement of the climate. Some say, there is no more yelling, sexism, outrageous comments and language.

The new committees are doing well; participation is good; there is more involvement and volunteers. Particularly the mental health committee "is doing a great job".

Humour is currently used as a stress reliever. People speak up more. "The nasty stuff is pretty much gone".

F. EMPLOYEES' SUGGESTIONS

Employees and managers have made the following suggestions (in no particular order):

- There could be more informal recognition of employees ensuring the inclusion of non-IOs- the formal recognition process is too long and therefore less meaningful.
- Continue with the leadership speakers program. It is well received and appreciated, as well as the young managers networking.
- The Level 9 Retreat was very much appreciated and should be repeated. A similar format should be offered to level 8 officers.
- The Mental Health Initiative is well appreciated and should continue to be supported with even more concrete programs.

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- The new transparency in decision making for training is well appreciated and should continue, requests for expression of interest should be broadened and the publicized criteria should be respected and applied.
- There should be more emphasis on cultural diversity in hiring.
- Sensitivity training is also needed. The expansion of people's worldview would be beneficial to the work and to the work environment. It is said that most people are not aware of their bias.
- A leadership series and training (communication and people management skills) for supervisors is essential.
- Ensure level 9 receive robust training as people supervisors and in conflict resolution.
- Level 9 and 10 should be subjected to a probationary period before being confirmed in their position having demonstrated adequate people management skills.
- The social committee is very much appreciated. Activities could be developed to reach different people (not all play hockey).
- The seasonal events like the gala and the summer BBQ are well appreciated and should continue.
- Many appreciate the mentorship program. However, some find it lacks structure; leaving it to the mentee to contact the mentor for discussion can be intimidating at first and therefore the relationship does not develop at the beginning to the point of making meeting requests easier.
- The shadowing program is also valued in that it teaches the employee the responsibility and views from higher levels. It is a good way to get to know senior staff. It will be beneficial to extend it to level 8 and non-IO employees. A feedback loop could be established to collect ideas from employees who have participated. They may have suggestions to improve processes and communications.
- Ensure that trainers are qualified trainers.

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- The assignments should be voluntary; there should be a mandatory rotation to ensure experience in both "lanes". Or there should be a hiring process and training program for each.
- Problem employees should be dealt with in a better manner: support managers if needed, or provide the tools – whether it is behavioural or competency related.
- Continue with the coaching program in PSU. It is the best thing that ever happened to the unit. It is a much more positive approach to training.
- HR should be acting as a neutral party in the process and the decisions. Managers have too much power and can play favourites, or can be perceived to favour a candidate over another that is not seen as well qualified.
- The HR unit should be reporting to HQ, not the local managers.
- A career planning advisor should be available to all employees.
- Managers should be encouraged to walk the floor more often even with groups that do not report to them. "The show of interest in who the working level individuals are would go a long way. It would show that what we do is important: I know you exist - your work is important to me - you are a part of this team". In the same vein, managers at all levels should easily acknowledge and address all and any employee when riding the elevator together.
- It is suggested that to a minimum, walkabouts would be essential following any significant event that may affect some or the general population of the organization.
- Put in place a review process within a year of the workplace climate as an essential piece of the intervention to be developed.
- "We need someone neutral, that we can trust, around here to talk to and to use as a sounding board and to provide assistance to resolve interpersonal conflicts or to coach us in having difficult conversations to address critical issues safely".

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- Management has to become more accessible

"Get to know your people; come show you care. A lot of the issues could be addressed easier and better."

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VII. ANALYSIS

Trust and Process Fairness are the two overarching factors that contribute to the negative workplace climate found in Toronto. Employees lose trust in managers and organizations that do not adhere to fundamental rules of process fairness. This means that one way an organization can find its way back to re-establishing its employees' trust is through the review and re-alignment of its decision making.

Based on the well-known work of Patrick Lencioni, *The Five Dysfunctions of a Team*, restoring the workplace climate of the Toronto region has to start with rebuilding trust. This is the very first element required to rebuild a team that will function to its full potential in a healthy workplace climate.

According to Lencioni, lack of trust leads to conflict and difficulty with interpersonal relations and communication. This leads to confusion about direction and priorities. This then generates a risk averse environment and blame games, which in turn finally results in lack of ownership, focus on ego and less than optimal output.

- **TRUST:** Members may conceal weaknesses and mistakes from others – hesitate to provide constructive feedback – avoid direct confrontations – jump to conclusions about intentions & attitudes of others – hold grudges – dread meetings and avoid them – presenteeism – absenteeism
- **CONFLICT:** Meetings are less productive – environment where back-politics & personal attacks, corridor venting can thrive – rumour mill flourishes - crucial topics/issues critical to team success are ignored – failure to tap into opinions & perspectives of team members – time & energy wasted on interpersonal risk management – avoidance strategies are favoured
- **COMMITMENT:** Ambiguity about direction and priorities - lack of confidence & fear of failure – attrition of key knowledge –second guessing among team members – playing it safe – risk averse decision making
- **ACCOUNTABILITY:** Resentment among team members for lack of recognition of expertise – missed deadlines & key deliverables – undue burden on leaders to maintain harmony – blame games

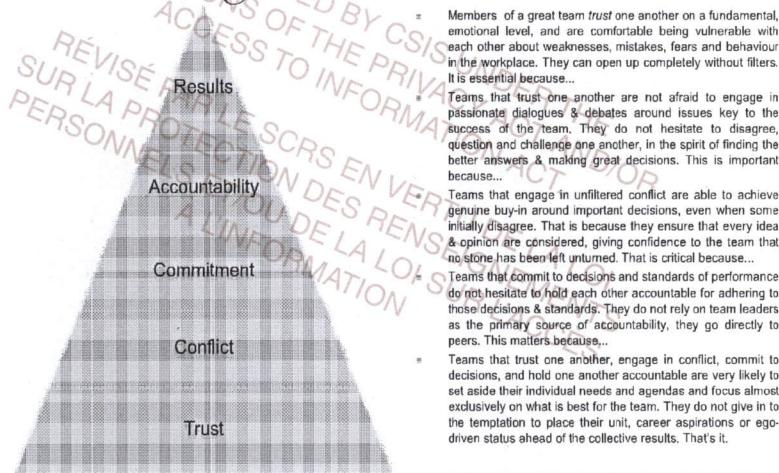
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- RESULTS: Lack of ownership – focus on status & Ego - faulty product – low standards – disengagement – ideas are no longer put forward – information not volunteered

Analysis: Requirements for a well functioning team



Patrick Lencioni, Jossy-Bass, 2002

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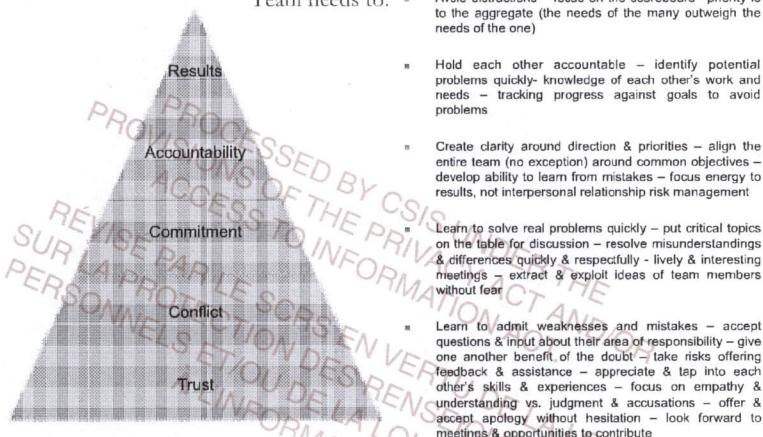
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The Goal: Overcoming the dysfunctions

Team needs to:



In order to re-establish trust in management and in the organization; achieve restoration of this group's cohesion; and improve the workplace climate, it is suggested that trust in processes be re-established first.

Professor Joel Brokner of the Columbia Business School in New-York wrote in the March 2006 Harvard Business Review:

Ultimately, each employee decides for him or herself whether a decision has been made fairly. But broadly speaking, there are three drivers of process fairness. One is how much input employees believe they have in the decision-

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making process: Are their opinions requested and given serious consideration? Another is how employees believe decisions are made and implemented: Are they consistent? Are they based on accurate information? Can mistakes be corrected? Are the personal biases of the decision maker minimized? Is ample advance notice given? Is the decision process transparent? The third factor is how managers behave: Do they explain why a decision was made? Do they treat employees respectfully, actively listening to their concerns and empathizing with their points of view?

VIII. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Develop and deploy a comprehensive intervention strategy to be implemented upon delivery of the results of the Assessment to employees.
- Develop a full and comprehensive communication strategy ahead of sharing the Report with employees and local managers. It would include a message from the Director to be delivered directly to the employees. It should also include information about the main initiatives and strategies that will be immediately put in place to address the issues.
- The presence of the Director is recommended throughout the presentations of the results of the Assessment.
- Set up a Task Force composed of key employees at various levels representing different units as well as a key well-respected executive manager to discuss implementation of the needed changes and process fairness strategies. Ensure task force members are allocated appropriate time to participate actively in its work.
- Provide a professional presence on location for up to six months, or as needed, to respond to employees' questions and advise them in the aftermath of the delivery of the Summary Report.
- Ensure real-time support and coaching is available to managers for a period of at least 6 months.
- Ensure the prompt and adequate availability of conflict resolution services resources.

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- Inform and involve the EA in the intervention strategy and follow-up.

This is a turning point for the organization in Toronto, and elsewhere. How the organization will address the situation will be critical. It will send a strong message (positive or negative) to these employees and to the rest of the organization. Senior executives need to be very much involved in the intervention and the workplace restoration exercise.

IX. CONFIDENTIALITY AND DISCLOSURE

This Management Report is delivered to the Assistant Director, HR for further consideration and action. The consultant made all efforts to maintain confidentiality and anonymity of the information collected.

ⁱⁱ Note: People were hesitant to clarify what level was meant when referring to managers. For most, it meant from Chiefs and above. Senior management refers to Deputy Directors General and above. Although reference is made to senior managers, managers and management, the negative perceptions did not apply to all. Three managers that have now left were very often mentioned. However, when asked if some of these concerns and negative perception applied to current managers, employees were of the opinion that some concerns still apply to a minority of the current managers, but that the situation had definitely improved.